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No. 511

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Within is brightness. All the room
Is full of faintly-sweet perfume,
The perfume of the drowsy
Wraps scene and mind in subtle trance,
As up and down, in dizzy whirl,
Swings fair-faced youth and happy girl.

No hint of want or woe is there.
No face shows trace of hopeless care,
As jewels flash, but brighter far,
Shine eyes than any jewels are.
So with gay music, laugh and song
The fleet-winged moments drift along.

Without, in darkness, and alone,
With bare feet on the icy stone,
With feelings cold as the north wind blows
The frost-chill through her thinbare clothes,
Through lace that hangs the windows wide
Looks in a beggar, hollow eyed.

Such hungry eyes as hers must touch
The heart not hardened overmuch.
Such wan, white lips, such tired feet,
As standing in the dreary street,
She watches youth's light-hearted tread
And craves, poor soul! a crust of bread!

So goes the world. The poor must wait
As beggars at the rich man's gate,
Oh, fate! not crueler is sin!
From waste and plenty take and give
The crust that helps the poor to live.

Azhort, the Axman;

OR,

The Secrets of the Ducal Palace.

A ROMANCE OF VENICE.

BY ANTHONY P. MORRIS,
AUTHOR OF "FRANZ, THE FRENCH DETECTIVE,"
"THE MAN OF STEEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE HEADSMAN'S FAMILY.

The home of Azhort, once chief executioner of Venice, was situated at the extreme northwest of that cluster of islands which, in late days, was known as the New Lazaretto.

Azhort's house was a simple structure, gray with age, and with the usual—but in this instance most neglected—garden at the rear. It had changed owners repeatedly during and subsequent to that notorious middle of kingdoms and republics known in history as the League of Cambrai, and finally became the castle of one whose vicious and shuddering nature of calling fitly sorted with a building gloomy, treacherous and scowling of aspect.

Though some miles distant from the scene of conflict on the Grand Canal, the gondola of Azhort soon arrived at the step-stones of what was known as the "Deathsmen's Fort"—for on the broad, square roof, or rampart, were several pieces of brass cannon that had been captured and placed there at a period of war with the French.

Piero, the pretending gondolier, was well acquainted with the destination, and plied his oar as steadily as if earnest in the employ of the man who was hated from the depths of his heart, and whose vengeance upon, for the possible death of Cladius Alburno.

It was fortunate for the intentions of Piero that the ex-chief of executioners had bestowed no special scrutiny upon his new servitor—employed that very morn—and more fortunate that, as chance willed, Piero was, in his disguise, in close resemblance to that vagabond. Hence, having made the boat fast to the stairs before the dull-muzzled abode of Azhort, and having entered to the presence of that terrible man's family—Piero following by order—for it was mostly customary that a regularly employed gondolier became also the general servant—there ensued no discovery of the change in attendants which had occurred.

If the home of the deathsmen was darkly foreboding without, its interior was even more strikingly impressive.

Like his gondola, like his somber cape of velvet, the cap he wore the scowl on his eagle-and-tusks eyes everything was black, black as the shadow of the earth over an eclipsed moon. Furniture, balustrades, ceilings and walls, even the flooring of mosaicked flags, were glossed in darkness, until the beholder could imagine himself in a vast tomb of polished black agate, perched by a ghost of ghostrily whispering.

Though wealthy enough to enjoy all comforts of room and convenience, Azhort had his peculiarities and seemed rather fond of confining himself to a single apartment on the lower floor, where he took meals with his family, but invariably slept alone. This apartment was but a few steps from the front entrance, decked profusely with armorial trappings, helmets and plates of knights long dead, and containing the great two-handed sword and broad-bladed ax, with which his relentless arm had dealt the death-blow for many victims supplied by the dread Council of Ten when he was in the zenith of his career as chief executioner.

Striding to the large chamber, he led the way—Piero boldly in the rear, and presently joined his family: wife and son.

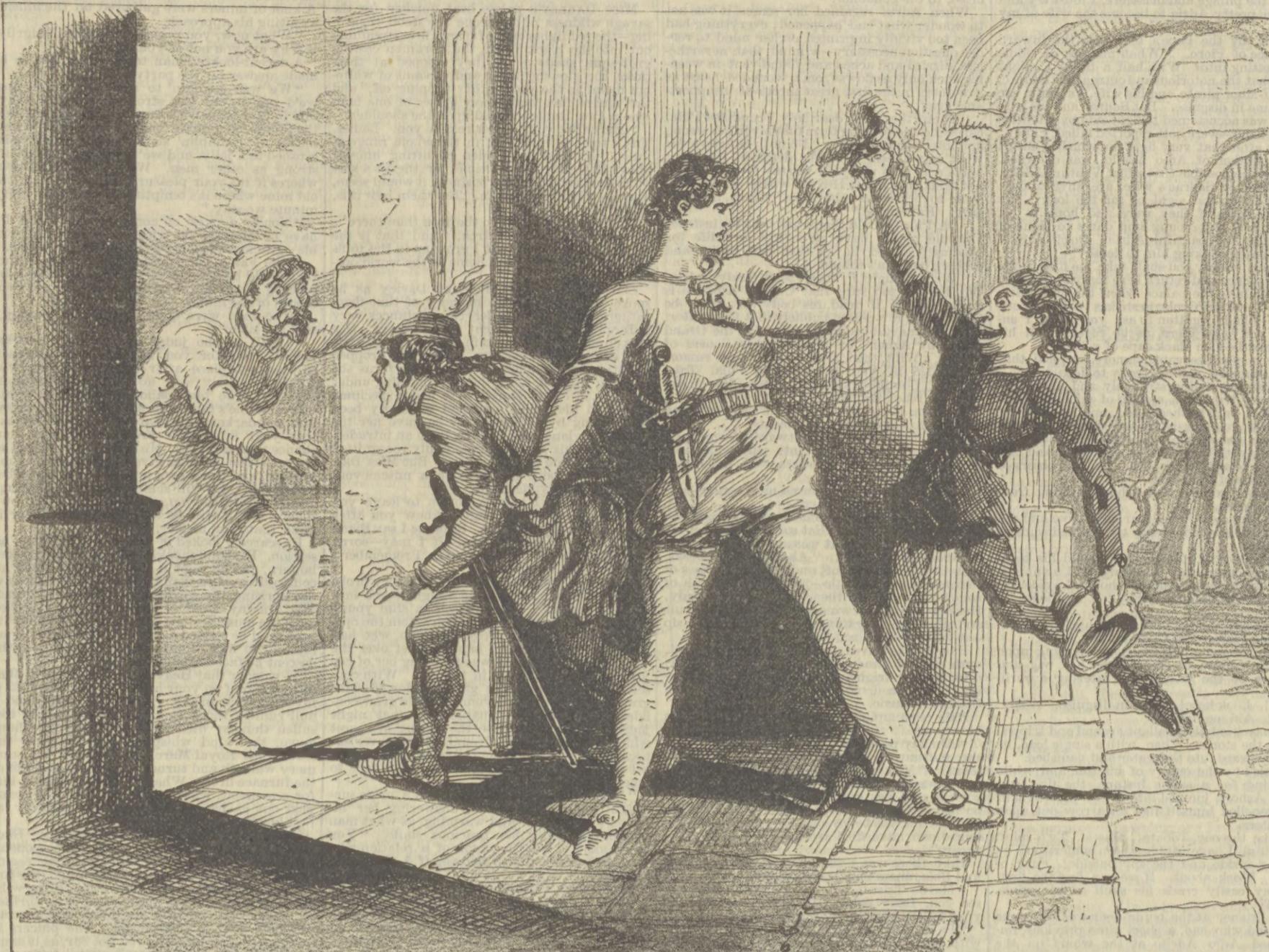
The wife was tall, gaunt, yellow-skinned, having but one eye that was watery and leering; feature and person coarse and awkward; voice that rasped and gurgled in the throat of a long, craning neck; movements those of a woman more masculine of habit than female.

The son, like the father, was dwarfish and ugly, dressed in black, tight, spangled garments, and seated, with twisted legs, on a high stool of ebon stain. On his head he wore a flimsy conical cap. His nose was long and pointed; mouth broad and narrow, and capable of a dunce-like grin, which, at times, displayed the teeth of a squirrel. His eyes were small, dark and cunning, and in their slightly sunken depths there dwelt a something that warned of a passion not safe to be aroused.

The coffin-laden furnishings, the armorial display, the virago wife, the eely-dwarfish son, all were closely observed by Piero, and when at last he stood firmly within the headman's abode he exclaimed under his breath:

"By St. George! I have followed the lead of Satan. Here are his favorite imps. I am in a small kingdom of perdition. Poor chance would have did they discover that not a single gondolier but a lieutenant of the famous Cladius Alburno—whom the executioner hated enough to kill, or try to kill—has dared to enter the infernal home of Azhort, to spy and for vengeance. Fiends, all! they would flay me alive!"

The arrival of the lord of the household was



"Hi! Look here! a man in disguise. A spy! A spy! Aid me, father!"

hailed with a shout from the young dwarf upon the stool, and Bal-Balla, the wife, mumbled some brief words of recognition.

"Supper!" growled Azhort, sending his cap, with a twirl, across to the grasp of his grinning host.

"Tis ready long since. Any news from the Palazzo Ducale?" answered and asked Bal-Balla.

"Oh! Hi! we have a new man!" squeaked Tobato, the junior dwarf, who had immediately fixed his snapping little eyes on Piero.

"I do not like the glance of that young rascal," passed in the mind of Piero. "It has not the fierceness of his father's, but it is even more prying and may discover that the beard and the wig I wear are false. To be known as a spy here would, undoubtedly, insure my death. Let me be ready." And he cautiously felt in his bosom to see if his stiletto was safely there.

"Let me know you, fine fellow," said the deformed youth, sliding from his stool and advancing like a spider over its silken web, "I am the son of Azhort. My name is Tobato—yours?"

"Piero, bless you, boy; a trusty gondolier, I hope."

"I think I like your looks—Piero—Piero" declared the dwarf, grinning more broadly, casting his saucy eyes first on the head, then on the body, then on the feet, and finally back to the face of Piero, as he repeated the name of that person twice and slowly. "Yes, you tickle my fancy. That great grizzly beard—I always liked big beards, though I cannot grow one myself. Hi! and hair of two colors—black and gray. How very odd! Look, mother: a man with hair of—"

"Cease your chatter, Tobato. Back to your seat—hear!—while I talk with your father. Sit you down in that corner, Rags. The last to Piers and leaving a brown, brawny, hairy arm and claw-of-a-finger toward a distant part of the room."

Piero obeyed silently, keeping covert watch upon the grinning Tobato, whose eyes followed him intently, and whose supple coiled limbs cased in black reminded of some huge and venomous spider, surmounted by the head of a clown and the expression of an imp, all ready to spring forward and bite, tear or devour.

A portion of the wig worn by Piero had slipped aside, betraying the true brown color of his hair beneath. By a dexterous movement he adjusted this as he sat down on the box indicated by Bal-Balla.

"When you ask for news," growled Azhort, using the Spanish language, and already broadened hungrily at the bounty which Bal-Balla had spread before him—"when you ask for news, let me tell you that I have a plenty of it, which I only gathered this day," gazing ravenously.

"You always said that my ears were both big and ugly. Go on with the news you bring," returned Bal-Balla, shortly, standing before him with arms akimbo and staring at him with his watery but steady one eye.

"Hi! thought Tobato, as he continued his keen survey of Piero. "Hi! that fellow's hair is now all of one color—gray. What has been done to the black patch I saw a moment since? I no longer see it."

Piero transferred his attention to the fierce-looking couple at the table.

"Come, now," he muttered, though in a whisper smothered by his great beard, "there is to

be some news gossip. I would like to hear what manner of news this man of devil's shape is accustomed to bring his family. He speaks in Spanish, and has either forgotten that I am here, or imagines that a poor gondolier has never learned aught but his own beloved dialect. Oh, but I am as good at Spanish, or Italian, or French, or Swiss."

"The Duke d'Osuna does not want the crown of Naples," abruptly stated Azhort.

"Hoo! what mean you? Was it not for that the Council of Ten—as you and I know—was apprised of the intended revolt?"

"A trick! Bah! Nobles are full of tricks. You may not swear, by their acts to-day, what they may do on the morrow."

"True enough. What, then, is the duke after?"

"The duke, the marquis and the ambassador—D'Osuna, Do Bedmar and Pedro de Toledo—seek the overthrow of the Republic, and select some one in whom Venice is in almost open hostility to Spain. It is not the crown of Naples but to commence with the pillage of Venice. So much to the Duke d'Osuna!"

"Hoo!" screeched Bal-Balla, excited on the instant. "Hoo! the pillage of Venice. That is it? Then fire!—sword!—riot! How gay! I am for it! Let us have pillage! Viva! Good for the Duke d'Osuna!"

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—if it has been found—have anything to do with the discovery of a treasure? These beasts are mysterious as well as devilish!"

"It is money and vengeance! A good day's work for my smitten father!" cried Tobato, sinking again to his high stool, after having pocketed a goodly share of the coin from the purse.

"Hark ye," said Azhort, with a serious frown: "if Venturi Adello will deal with me, I will for once in my life do an honest deed. I will free him. We will share the treasure together. There are millions in precious stones for both! Ho! then for the pillage of Venice; and after the pillage, the sea!—the wide, free sea! The ship, the breeze my hundred good men of Barbaro, and Sadrac once more on the pirate's deck! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ho! And I—the Fazienda of old—with cutlass in hand, will be ready at your side!"

"Ha! yes, the sea! A very good pirate I think I shall make," chimed in Tobato. "But I must have a bride. Give me Adria Trienti for my bride and queen, for I have long loved her!"

Tobato had no recollection of being on the sea; he was too young at a time when his parents lived entirely upon it and plied a nefarious trade, as will be developed duly.

"Very true," agreed the headsman, eying his son with tigerish pride. "It is a famous idea. Out of the pillage and massacre, I must try and save the pretty Adria to become the wife of my boy."

"Now, by the Pope's toe!" was the inward utterance of Piero. "What manner of riddle are you getting into? With half a brain I might judge that the notorious and outrageous Sadrac, the half-Moor pirate, and his wife, Fazienda, are before me in disguise. But Sadrac and his wife—who was accustomed to fight side by side with her husband—were both reported killed, I know shortly after that very fight in which Venturi Adello, father of Adio Adello, was drowned. It cannot be possible that either Venturi Adello, or Sadrac, or Sadrac's wife, are alive to-day. All have been lost sight of for too long. Yet they speak as if they were, and hope to be pirates; and that young imp dares to think of abducting the beautiful Adria. Dog! How I should enjoy choking him to death!"

"Come, fellow, you shall take me first to the Trieste palace, and return here for your supper. Come again to the palace when the iron hammer of Torre del Orologio strikes twelve. Your name—I had forgotten to ask you when I engaged you"—to Piero, as he replaced on his shoulders the rich black cape of velvet.

"Piero, your servant, signore," replied that person, humbly, making ready to depart.

Tobato was acting strangely and excitedly. The family trio had a system of chirurgery comprehensive only to themselves, and in that language the younger dwarf was striving to communicate something to his father. Bat-Balla was busy with the dishes at the table and Azhort was adjusting his cap. Neither observed the motion of his son.

"Follow!" commanded Azhort, striding from the apartment.

Piero kept close in the rear, and close and unnoticed by Piero noiselessly tiptoed and squirmed ed.

As the ex-chief of executioners laid his hand upon the outer door suddenly and swung it open with a jerk, a man, who had evidently been eavesdropping, nearly fell headlong inward.

"Guns and death! What is this?" he cried, bounding forward to grasp the spy.

But in the same instant Tobato sprung upon the back of Piero, tearing off the hat, and whiskers of the latter, and uttering a shrill yell.

"Hoh! Look here! a man in disguise. A spy! A spy! Aid me, father!"

Piero twirled his assailant around and tripped him on the stones. Then, with a single leap, he dived forward into the water and vanished.

Startled by the outcry of his son, and while hesitating for a single instant, the first spy eluded Azhort, jumped into a two-proved stiff and propelled himself like an arrow out upon the waters.

"Take the oar, Tobato! Haste! Two spies!

What if all I have said has been understood by the spy inside and the spy outside? Fury of earth! Work about. If we can find the first, we may easily crack his skull as he swims. Haste!"

The listener at the outer door was the same vagabond who had, a short time previous, impounded Adio Adello at the wharf on the Grand Canal to purchase his miserable-looking dog.

As the black gondola moved about over the now moonlighted waters, in search of Piero, the dull boom of a distant gun came to the ears of father and son.

"Ha! the voice of a *bombarde*!" exclaimed Azhort. "I judge it comes from the fortress at Porto di Lido. No matter; it does not concern me. And since we cannot find that spy—death merits him!—why, on, on, to the Trieste palace!"

But that dull boom of the gun from Porto di Lido was of very great interest to Azhort, as subsequent events proved.

CHAPTER V.

A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT.

THROUGH well beyond all danger from that collision on the Grand Canal consummated through the inhuman connivance of Lady Perci, the gondola containing Adria continued with unfaltering speed toward the curve, where, after running westward, the waters turn to an eastern course, the spot of the disaster happening in the middle of the channel.

Feeling by intuition, that a sudden and plotted perfidy menaced the man of her heart's adoration, her anxious face peered between the curtains, and straining eyes, sparkling with love and fear, were riveted upon the gondola of Cladins.

Behind and above her shoulders was another face, that of a faithful attendant, apparently of Indian extraction, frank of countenance and of muscular build. She had, as it were, reared and watched over Adria since the marriage of Lady Perci with Marco Trienti, twelve years previous.

Cladins, when covered with badges of fame, had twice visited the Trienti palace. Once—the first time—and sufficient to seal the destiny of two young hearts for the chance of happiness of misery enduring; for at the first moment of the meeting of their eyes, gaze to gaze, Cladins had said to himself:

"Here is my fate. Heaven has brought us together."

And Adria:

"This man is to be my king. I know not why, but already I love him."

Knowing Cladins Alburno to be an honorable man and a famous commander in the navy, and attracted, herself, by his noble bearing, the Indian-woman, Phla, had encouraged her young mistress in the amour thus singularly begun: for the two responsive hearts were not long in consummating their pure passion-fection.

It was much owing to her artifice of Phla, who was a shrewdly well-informed woman, that the clandestine meetings of the two lovers were obtained, after the success of the vile plot conceived by Lady Perci, owing to which Cladins was proclaimed a traitor and outlaw by The Ten and sought for with bloodthirsty zeal by the spies of that silent, though stealthy and terrible Council.

Hence, Phla, with great interest, though not so deep nor as keen as Adria's, watched in suspense what she readily perceived—what both felt assured—was a premeditated assault upon Cladins Alburno.

"Oh! Phla! what can it mean? Know you that black gondola with a prowl-like flashing steel? I have often seen the same before now. See! It is almost on the other, which has scarce time to turn and meet bow to bow. Do you mark?"

"Ay, right well, Lady Adria, do I know it; and the bow is indeed steel, sharp steel, sharp as a knife. It is the gonicola of that most hor-

rible of men, Azhort, once chief executioner of Venice."

"Ah! that man of blood. Look, Phla!—look! They meet! They strike! They crash! Oh, Heaven have mercy! Cladins! Cladins!"

For just then the two boats collided, and Adria saw the angry leap of her lover, his brief struggle with a demon shape, the two furious stabs dealt with a blade that gleamed brightly in the setting sun—then Cladins fell and sunk from sight.

A shriek as agonizing as if the knife of Azhort had sheathed itself in her own bosom broke from her horrified lips, and with the shriek, and face white than the terraced landings around her, she drooped backward, insensible, into the quicksands.

"There, there, my poor lady," moaned the unconscious maiden.

"But he may not be dead. Nay, have hope. Straight to the palace and make all haste," she cried, to the condoler.

When Phla recovered her senses, it was not to wonder what had happened; everything had been too vividly imprinted on her mind to render question necessary—a mind that, nevertheless, dizzied and ached and found vent in weeping such only as flows from a wounded heart as it withers in the first great throes of insupportable grief.

"There, there, my dear lady," consoled Phla, caressing the sobbing form that lay in her strong and affectionate arms. "Do not yet grieve for what may appear to be the death of the right noble man who was your worthy lover. I can not think that a just Heaven would permit such a thing."

"Oh! Phla! I wish that it had been me instead!"

"I would gladly have given my own life for Cladins!" gasped the lips that were buried and sobbing on Phla's shoulder.

"Well, enough I know that, Lady Adria. But he not too sure that Cladins Alburno is dead. Wait. If dead, his body will surely be found when it is noiselessly publicized that the *traitor*, Cladins, was stabbed and drowned in the Grand Canal by Azhort, ex-chief of executioners of Venice. Wait, then, until we hear such rumor. Be guided by your ever-faithful Phla. Take respite. Compose yourself, I beg, dear lady, until we reach the palace."

Arriving at the palace, Phla hurried her young mistress to her private apartments.

Adria, though at last outwardly composed, was still in the last狂ness with which walks melancholy, tired and hopeless, with little recklessness.

Alone together Phla evinced most serious concern for her precious charge.

"Some refreshment immediately for my dear lady. You are weak. Eat something. Let me change your attire"—it was anything to divert the thoughts of Adria. "Ah, melt those cheeks, that always blushed soft and rich as the roses of the garden, need a little—just a little—touch of rouge! No! Well, then, eat, my dear lady. Here is sparkling wine and ripe, sweet fruit and other tempting things. A taste, a bite, a sip—it will stir the blood."

But Adria received the repast aside and sat, with clasped hands, a very picture of despair, drowning a frightened dream—of that glistening blade in a demon hand which had stricken Cladins Alburno.

Phla contemplated her sorrowfully, at a loss how to act.

"Ah! my poor babe, my poor Lady Adria," she murmured, her honest eyes filling with tears. "May all the evil spirits under the earth wreak unending torment on the ugly wretch who has given my mistress this overpowering fright. Yes, a fright—only a fright, for I do not yet believe that noble Cladins Alburno can have died by the hand of that assassin."

Here, there was a summons at the entrance, and Phla, answering it, returned to say:

"Marco Trienti, your step-father, wishes to see you, Lady Adria. Come, let me arrange your toilet befitting a meeting with him."

"Be expeditions Phla, for I am anxious to be with him. Though a step-father, he has ever been a father to me, and my love has gone out to him as a daughter's."

"Marco Trienti is a good man, heart and deed," observed Phla, busying herself with the toilet. "Would that I could think the same of his wife."

"Hush, Phla. Remember—she is my mother."

"And," was the woman's mental comment, "a very unmotherly mother, I vow, if she is your mother, which I have doubted, for some years." But she kept this thought behind her lips.

The toilet completed, they descended the broad staircase together. Phla had many privileges, owing to her long and faithful service in the household, and in her plain though tidy costume had nearly always remained close to her young mistress, even when the large saloons and corridors were wont to blaze and sizzle with the light and dazzle of gay entertainments or masquerades, for which the Trienti palace was noted.

Half-way down they met a page ascending.

"Can you tell me where Lady Perci has returned?" he inquired.

"And I find it hard to forgive myself, because I am a mean and hypocritical person gained by treachery what I ought to have had by right."

Why a chord of sympathy should stir in March's breast, he best knew, but the two found their old interest in each other awake and intensified, and it was due to Madeline's imperious demand that Mr. March was invited to make his appearance in that upper stratum of society which found its place at Mr. Ruble's table, at the next dinner-party given by the latter.

"Let me trust your venture was a more successful one," said March, answering her allusion to that time and warming, as what man would not under her gracious smile. "You were going to win the favor of a relation who was to make you her heiress, if I remember right."

Miss Darley's countenance fell.

"But I failed, too," she answered, frankly.

"And I find it hard to forgive myself, because I am a mean and hypocritical person gained by treachery what I ought to have had by right."

As the door opened, they entered the drawing-room, said Phla, for I am anxious to be with him. Though a step-father, he has ever been a father to me, and my love has gone out to him as a daughter's."

"Marco Trienti is a good man, heart and deed," observed Phla, busying herself with the toilet. "Would that I could think the same of his wife."

"Hush, Phla. Remember—she is my mother."

"And," was the woman's mental comment, "a very unmotherly mother, I vow, if she is your mother, which I have doubted, for some years."

The toilet completed, they descended the broad staircase together. Phla had many privileges, owing to her long and faithful service in the household, and in her plain though tidy costume had nearly always remained close to her young mistress, even when the large saloons and corridors were wont to blaze and sizzle with the light and dazzle of gay entertainments or masquerades, for which the Trienti palace was noted.

Half-way down they met a page ascending.

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"Is he present this evening? I was led to understand that he was a guest of Mr. Wetherby," said Harry, unmoved by the other's pleasure.

"Oh, but ye know it wouldn't be good for 'm to appear in society on the same day after sending a 'fella' to the Kingdom of Heaven—or the other place!"

And this lesson in social etiquette was given with a patronizing air that was most exasperating.

"Thank you!" said Harry, so gravely that his irony was perceived.

"Oh, not all! Rubio played the devil and all with the fair creatures before. After this he'll distance everything on the course."

"No doubt!"

And with set teeth Harry bowed, and passed on.

But while his fury was at its height she met him, and her smile calmed the tempest.

Without rudeness he could not avoid asking her to join in the dance that was just forming. She had courted the invitation, that by subtle contrivance by which a lady may compass her own wishes, and her smile showed her gratification as she accepted it.

After the dance they went out on the cool veranda; and he was once more completely under her spell.

"I am disappointed that you have failed to meet my cousin Inez," she said, after a time. "I have been to see if she could not come down; but she is suffering from a raging headache. I know she will be pleased with her; and I hope soon to present you."

The name of Inez brought up a train of bitter thoughts in the mind of our hero. He determined by one desperate effort to break the spell which this woman wove about him.

"Miss Careno," he said, "I regret that I must leave you. My dearest friend is now perhaps dying, if not already dead, stricken down by the hand of Don Manuel Rubio. I came here to-night with the intent to meet him, force another duel upon him, and kill him! As he is not here, I must seek him elsewhere."

At this the girl turned pale with horror.

"Oh, Mr. Hazeltine!" she cried, "you cannot—

"I can, and will!" he replied, with dogged determination.

But, forgetful of all conventionalities, she caught his hands and detained him, as he was about to leave her. Then with rapid, eloquent words she denounced dueling as murder.

By his own confession he was seeking the life of a fellow man from a spirit of revenge. Did it lessen the crime to add suicide to murder? since he had no right to jeopardize his own life in it. And what palliation was the fact that human law affixed no penalty, when God's law was so plain?

He was a Northern man, and all the weight of his early education lay with him in argument. Indeed the project had been born of the spirit of recklessness that possessed him. He sought some desperate excitement to divert him from the fierce struggle that was going on in his breast.

She appealed to him in the name of his mother—or his sisters, if he had any. She told him that Don Manuel was the lover of her cousin, Inez—this cousin who was more than a sister to her. Was he willing to break the heart of one so dear to her?

Lastly, she presented the danger to himself. And here her voice broke down, tears sprung to her eyes, and clinging to his hands, she begged him to promise that he would desist from his purpose.

In this crisis she who was the personification of modesty forgot maidenly reserve. The trammels of society fell away. That she had known him less than a week lost its significance. It was one soul crying out to another!

Great emotions transcend the rules applicable to the ordinary of life. Noble natures then soar free. This woman lost nothing of her dignity in being true to the inspiration that was given her.

Harry was thrilled by the magnetism of this direct appeal. He was bewildered by a strange intoxication. How, he scarcely knew; but he gave the promise, and got away from her and out of the house.

Out in the darkness he found himself walking with hurried strides; and there were tears on his cheeks!

He dashed them away, and with set teeth reached his apartments.

Passing Vikir without a glance, he swept aside the curtain and seized the handle of the door. It resisted his fierce wrench. It was locked.

The West Indian braced himself for the crisis that was at hand. His dark skin became a sallow yellow with pallor. He was resolved to defend his master against himself, with his life, if need be.

Then the storm burst!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LOATHSOME FATE.

WHEN Donna Inez retired from the parlors, after seeing her husband enter, she was a prey to fierce alternations of defiance and despair, pacing her room like a caged tigress, now wringing her hands, now clutching them—at one moment feeling as if she had the strength and courage to cope with him in a physical encounter, at the next prostrated by weakness and fear.

Before retiring to rest Paola entered her cousin's room, and found her already in bed, the tumbled drapery attesting her restlessness.

After sympathetic inquiry about Inez's indisposition, the girl expressed her regrets that it had prevented her cousin from meeting Mr. Hazeltine, but added the painful hostility of the latter toward Don Manuel, from which, however, she had disengaged him.

To this recital Inez listened, lying with her face in shadow. Whatever may have been her emotions, she held them well under control. When it was done, she naked, pointedly:

"How came he to tell you this? Men do not usually babble such matters to women whom they have known scarcely an hour."

Paola blushed.

"I don't know," she said. "It was a sort of apology for taking his departure so early."

Donna Inez thought rapidly. Here was a new crisis. Why had he told this to Paola, and by what power had she dissuaded him?

Inez knew Harry's truthfulness. Having promised Paola, he would keep his word. Could it be true that he sought Don Manuel only to avenge his friend, not knowing that he had other cause for enmity? Then he could not have recognized him.

But might not his failure to recognize Don Manuel imply that he was ignorant of her identity also? Asa Dillingham had suggested this possibility.

Thus, if he supposed her dead, and himself thus free, what was the significance of Paola's influence over him? For no one knew better than Inez the devoted friendship existing between Harry and Ned Taunton. Could he be in love with Paola already?

In any event, this much was certain—the acquaintance with Mr. Hazeltine must go no further.

"Paola," said her cousin, "I know nothing of the excellencies of this gentleman; but his hostility toward Don Manuel must of course be an effectual barrier between him and me; and I think I know your heart well enough to feel confident that you cannot remain impartial."

"But, Inez, he has given up his enmity," urged Paola.

"Of course you are at liberty to do as you please," said Inez, coldly; "but I can never understand any circumstances consent to meet him."

The gentle Paola was chilled, and with a depressed heart she sought her own room.

That night was to Donna Inez a night of torment. If Harry loved Paola and sought her society, the whole scheme must inevitably be defeated.

In the morning the trio of conspirators convened, and Iuca said:

"The time for concealment is past. Thomas Kittridge, alias James Wetherby, the man you have last introduced into the bosom of your family, is my husband! Imagine the effect of this announcement upon my dear, confiding cousin, Paola. But these two have met, and my word for it, are in love with each other, or will be, if further meeting is not prevented."

"Thomas Kittridge, alias James Wetherby, can you retrieve the blunder you have made?" "She shall leave the city to-morrow," said her guardian, wincing under her iteration of his name.

"Not so," objected Inez. "When she leaves the city, it must be in company with Leslie Mansfield, with a view to marrying him."

"Curse Leslie Mansfield!" growled Asa Dillingham, with an ugly scowl.

"Ellot! what's the matter with you?" asked Wetherby, while Inez stared in surprise.

"Look here," said Dillingham. "I'm ugly; but I'm flesh and blood; and, deeme! I'm in love with this little woman myself."

"The deuce you are!" cried Wetherby.

"I've got another plan to propose," pursued Dillingham. "Let me have the girl; and we can divide the money just the same."

"A capital plan!" laughed Wetherby.

"Open to two or three slight objections, however," added Inez.

"What objections?"

"You'rebed of innocence!" cried Wetherby; "you do you think we'd trust such a knave as you? When you 'ad the girl, and through'er to the title to the money, 'ow nicely you'd set us adrift!"

"With the prospect of your splitting on me?"

"And when to prison for conspiracy, hempelement, and the Lord knows what all! Oh, no—not for Joe!"

"But more than that, it would be impossible to force her into a marriage with you," added Inez. "My dear sir, there is a limit to human endurance. She would appeal to the public for protection."

"Ha! ha! ha! Hit's your beauty, Hasta!" laughed Wetherby. "Why, man, if a woman were to marry you voluntarily, hany court would set the contract aside on the ground of insanity!"

Asa Dillingham smiled, putting his clammy fingers to his livid lips, and his basilisk eyes glittered in very unpleasant fashion. Perhaps he did not forego his purpose.

"Enough of this!" interposed Inez, impatiently. "Mr. Hazeltine must be excluded from the house, and our first plan pushed at once. There is no need of longer delay. Let Paola be notified of what she has to expect down."

That afternoon Paola was called into her grecian's presence.

"My dear," began Wetherby, with some nervousness. "I have sent for you on a very important matter—vital, I may say, to your future."

"To what can you refer?" asked the girl, curiously.

"You are now twenty years of age?"

"Last month."

"Most women are married before that hage."

"But I don't want to marry, guardie."

"Nevertheless, it would be better for you."

"But I don't love any one."

"A school-girl's notion!—the effect of the license hallowed young people in this country, but fortunately you were born to wiser customs. By the provisions of your father's will I take 'place in heverything; and hacting as I know 'e would 'ave hacted, I've selected a husband for you."

"Oh, guardie!"

"In Hindland, as in Spain, and wherever children are 'eld in subjection to their parents or guardians, a light pair of eyes isn't considered sufficient qualification for a 'usband. I've selected a man with money and social position. None of your fly-aways; but a solid man of business—one 'oo will give you an establishment."

"Whom, guardie?" asked the girl, breathlessly.

"Hasta Dillingham!"

"Asa Dillingham!"

The girl stared, and then burst into a laugh.

"Why, guardie," she said, "I thought you were in earnest. You look as sober as a judge."

"And why shouldn't I be in hearest?" demanded Wetherby, in a tone of dogged severity.

"I don't see hanything to hexcite you to mirth."

"Oh! but Mr. Dillingham!"

"Well, Mr. Dillingham, a man known and highly respected by your mother."

"And therefore altogether too old for me!" said Paola, quickly—"not to add that he isn't handsome."

"Asdome is as 'andsome does! As for hage, older men 'ave married younger women, and 'apply, too."

"And therefore altogether too old for me!"

"I am as 'andsome as any man in the world."

"E's as proposed to me for your 'and; and is ready to settle twenty thousand pounds sterling on you the day of your marriage. There's no non-sense about twenty thousand pound!"

"But I'd rather not sell myself, even for so high a figure!" Paola persisted.

"My dear, I've hressed my wishes. Of course I hexpect obedience. Mr. Dillingham leaves for Hindland six weeks from to-day. I've promised 'im that 'is bride shall be ready for him."

"Oh, uncle—"

"No more at present. You will begin your preparations at once. If you will hexcuse me, I will take my hafter-dinner nap."

With white lips and whirling brain Paola left the library, sought her cousin Inez and cast her self weeping into her arms.

It was the bird going to the serpent for protection and sympathy!

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT.

With a terrible frown Harry Hazeltine whirled upon his servant.

"What is the meaning of this?" he cried, shaking the door with unreasoning impatience.

"Excellenza, do you forget that the door is locked in accordance with your orders?"

"Open it at once!"

"Pardon, excellenza. You charged me to retain the key, no matter what happened, or what you might do."

"Well, I have changed my mind. I revoke the command. Produce the key."

"Still pardon, excellenza. It is not your better self that speaks now."

"What! Dare you palter with me?"

"You made it a test of my love."

"I am on refer to obey me."

"I am not protest you from yourself."

"Slave!" thundered the enraged master.

White with fury he leaped upon the devoted

Vikir, clutched him by the throat, dashed him to the floor with one sweep of his powerful arm, and planted a foot on his breast.

The West Indian offered no resistance; but gazing into his master's face with sorrowing reproach, he said:

"Excellenza, my life is yours. Take it!"

And when I am dead, thinking why I died, your nobler self will gain the ascendancy.

You will be saved! For me, it is enough to know that Vikir never failed the master he loved, and to whom he owed so much."

At these words—at this devotion, a swift

transit took place in Harry's feelings.

Lifting his faithful servant up, he cried, with tears in his eyes:

"Forgive me, Vikir! Your generosity over-

whelms me with shame. My friend, you are right. Your devotion shall save me. I will never enter that accursed room again!"

"Excellenza, again I recognize you!" cried Vikir, falling upon his knees, and covering his master's hand with kisses. "How proud and happy am I that my love prevails!"

"Vikir, it will prevail, if you stand firm."

"Excellenza, may I ask a favor?"

"Anything, Vikir, after the wrong I have done you."

"Speak not of that, my master. It is for you alone that I think. While you are strong in good resolves, put the temptation forever away from you. Let me enter yonder and destroy the demon!"

Harry hesitated.

"Excellenza, are you sincere in the purpose you have avowed?"

"Yes, Vikir."

"Then why cling to that which destroys?"

"My faithful friend, my brother, do as you wish!" cried Harry, putting all conviction reluctantly from him.</



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In Our Next!
THE SERIAL BEAUTIFUL.
Drifting to Ruin;
OR,
THE MILLS OF THE GODS.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "DID SHE SIN?" "SOWING THE
WIND," "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "VIALS
OF WRATH," ETC., ETC.

Using a rarely beautiful girl, poor but proud, who insures men's hearts as the flower insures the bee, as a central figure in a group of fine characters in high life, there flows from the pen a story so full of the enchantment of love, daring ambition and the fierce fire of a woman's desperate game, that we have a

Drama in Domestic Life

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Madge, the Forest of the Pure,
Eliza, the Angel of the Hospital,
Hugh St. Morse, the Wronged Husband,
Carroll, the Deceived and Deceiving,
Lisette, the Bad and the Good,

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We have in hand, to follow Mrs. Crowell's notable serial novel, a new work of characteristic novelty in person, plot and story, from the pen of the author of "Bronze Jack," "Fresh of Frisco," etc., etc. It is equally a romance of adventure, legal rascality, personal achievement and love—of deepest interest and distinguished by that delightful flavor which renders Mr. Aiken's productions so popular and acceptable.

And letters continue to come, day after day, underpaid in postage. When each mail turns up a number of letters marked "due 3c," "due 6c," etc., it is pretty evident that correspondents are either very careless or *designed* to cheapen the cost of correspondence at the publishers' expense. Which?

"If declined," says a contributor, "will you kindly say why?" A request often made but almost uniformly "declined with thanks." We hitherto have explained how impossible it is for an editor to *give reasons*. He may have a dozen reasons wholly independent of literary merit, for not accepting—which he cannot explain; or, if he rejects a contribution because of its want of proper merit, to *give reasons* is to add to his paid duties the unpaid office of critic and teacher. Only in rare instances can he depart from the necessary rule to give no reasons for his failure to accept story, sketch or poem.

Sunshine Papers.

The Lady.

"ARE there," asks a cynical old bachelor, "any ladies left in the world? There are plenty of upstart misses, plenty of young women and old women; but are there any *ladies*? If so, where are they? How shall they be discovered?"

Yes, we believe there are a few ladies in the world—a few *perfect ladies*; as few, perhaps, as there are perfect gentlemen. And when the doubting questioner propounded so grave a proposition, we think he meant no disrespect, by his fashion of wording it, to the good name woman which has been honorably used by the most perfect man who ever trod the earth, in His address to His mother. The unbelieving bachelor would simply distinguish between the great mass of womankind and those, the flower of their sex, who have inherited or cultivated those graces of demeanor and character supposed of old to belong only to the female of royal descent—the titled lady. And while, now, those who—*to paraphrase Tennyson's words*—can "bear without abuse the good old name of gentleman" —The Lady—are indeed something hard

to find, their home, when discovered, may as often prove a cottage as a palace.

Not position, nor wealth, nor birth, can make a lady, though all of these may, and should, conduce to that gentle and noble deportment which ranks the gentlewoman superior to her ordinary feminine sisterhood. Whether the wife of a plowman or the wife of a lord, a dweller in a mountain cottage or a presidential palace, but able to read and write or familiar with all the accomplishments of modern learning, veined with the blood of royalty or the blood of slavery, the *lady* is a lady "for a fact," and discoverable to all who know a *perfect lady* when they meet her. I have heard it often said of a negro woman, who, in her youth and the long-ago days of Northern slaveholding, was the property of my ancestors, that she "was one of the most *perfect ladies* who ever trod the earth;" and I have in my mind, now, a lady of education, refinement and wealth in regard to whom every one says—no matter how long or how short the time they have known her—"Is she not a *perfect lady*?"

So you see, you cynical man, that there are some ladies—ladies easily recognizable as such—in existence; and you may look for her, everywhere—not that you will find her everywhere—until you discover her and lose your bachelor heart.

In church—she never stares at her; never turns to look back; never whispers, nor yawns, nor fidgets; never exchanges recognitions with her friends during the time of service. She does not come late, in order to display her apparel, nor make a *furore* by rustling up the aisle and into the pew; nor does she insist upon having a certain seat, to the inconvenience of others. She is careful not to attire herself for the worship of God as if going to a promenade concert or a ball, not to wear anything so strikingly peculiar or gay as to distract the attention of her neighbors from the solemnity of the service. When she leaves church it is not after spending a half-hour in gossip and small-talk, neither is it with disdainful disregard of all those members of the same communion less richly dressed than herself and more lowly in station; for all, she will have a kindly smile, a graceful greeting; and for those whose families have suffered from sickness or bereavement, an interested inquiry.

If among the women who are shopping, the *perfect lady* is sought, she will not be discovered giving the clerks needless trouble, talking loudly, speaking impatiently and dictatorially to those who serve her. She will never be heard "beaving down" a shopman; she will never be caught buying coarse and cheap underwear at the expense of showy hats and dresses; she will never neglect the smiling "If you please," or "May I trouble you?" she will never forget the kindly "Thank you," for services rendered.

When traveling, the *perfect lady* is plainly dressed; she makes no show of jewelry, she is quiet-mannered; she does not fuss, nor worry, nor talk loud, nor betray excitability, irritability, nor selfishness; she does not stare at people, nor allow her children, her servants, or her pets, to inconvenience or annoy any one; she accepts favors gratefully, she declines them graciously.

As a guest, the lady is chary of giving unnecessary trouble; she consults the rules and regulations of the house, she shows her appreciation of every effort to give her pleasure; as a hostess, her aim is to have her guests well acquainted and enjoy themselves thoroughly; she neglects no effort within her power and means to please and entertain them, and she sees to it that while they are in her home their preferences are consulted, their tastes considered; their views and prejudices respected.

Among her children, the *perfect lady* is mother, friend, confidante, playmate, adviser; she always speaks softly, and gently, and truthfully; she is just and merciful, respected and reverenced, and her word is law. With her servants it is the same; she is always mistress of the situation, but mistress in so kindly and gentle a fashion that they are scarcely conscious of being ruled; and she is not mistress, alone, but kindest friend and counselor.

The *perfect lady* is always revered and beloved of the poor; she is never haughty, never arrogant, never selfish, never cruel; she makes no boast of her wealth; she never holds herself superciliously superior to those whose advantages have been less than her own. She is low-spoken, she is glad to please, she is *always the same*. The true lady is the *Christian woman*—using the term in no sectarian sense, but its broadest and its fullest; for she who can rightfully lay claim to the graces of perfect and likeliness is she whose every thought and act is an exponent of that golden rule—the adoption of which, as a life-principle, is a hundred times more sure a sign of a noble Christianity than the devotion to any creed or the repetition of any confession.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

FOR OTHERS' SAKE.

I THINK one of the most beautiful little incidents I have come across in my random readings is that of the old man who was planting some trees, and who answered the remark, "Why should you do this when you cannot expect to live to see the trees attain their growth?" with the following: "I plant them that others may enjoy their shade, just as those did who planted these for you and me." A beautiful speech, but a more beautiful deed. Working for others' sake.

This brought to my mind another incident, more homely perhaps, but none the less true, and just as unselfish. Some people detect certain kinds of food, and I have known one person so affected by the scent of beans or onions as to almost cause a faintness to come over her, if she prepared them for the table. Many have asked her why she ever has these things in her house if they like them; those who do like them shall not be deprived of their treat, even if they affect me so strangely." A good woman, that, and if she is unselfish in little things like this, she is indeed something hard

to find, their home, when discovered, may as often prove a cottage as a palace.

Are we expected to jog along at ease and

never have anything but our own way? Must we never put ourselves out for others' sake? I should think that one who can make another's life run smoother in the grooves would deem it a pleasure and not a task to do so. What if there be no reward accompanying it; kindness, goodness, thoughtfulness, unselfishness—like virtue—are their own reward. You will not regret working for others' sake.

Two of the happiest companions that ever formed a friendship for each other were one who was partially deaf and the other totally blind. It was almost a lesson to see these two together, for it taught one how a person could be happy even though he were deprived of one of his senses. You may have thought it strange that these two should form such a friendship, yet there was nothing so singular in it. Both had an *affection*, each felt for, and pitied the other—not only pitied, but helped him; one was ears to the deaf, the other, eyes to the blind. As others gradually drew away from these two they naturally came closer together. At first it seemed a duty for them to do what they could to make life sweeter for the other; then that duty grew into a pleasure, and where others might have been discontented under infirmities, they found contentment and happiness; and in ministering to each other's afflictions, and striving to make them lighter, they seemed to forget their own. And we might be of more use in this world were we to live for others' sake.

"And do we not live for others' sake?" Maybe, sometimes. But is it not done too often for the sake of some *reward*? Would we as tenderly nurse and care for those who had naught to leave behind them when dead, and no means to pay for comforts while living, as we would one who was possessed of an ample fortune which would come to us at his death? Are we as willing to do a favor for those who can pay us only in thanks as for those who will reward us with money?

As we are as glad to welcome the simple as the grand! Do we treat homespun as well as broadcloth, if the former lacks the greenbacks? Do we show by our words, and in our actions, the difference between the stations held by the rich and poor? In passing through the streets do we bow low to the one who has a large account at the bank and feel it an honor to do so, while we pass working men and women with a slight nod, as though we were almost ashamed to acknowledge such acquaintances?

But all this is *not* living for *others*; it is acting from an interested motive; we expect to reap some benefit from it; the point is too thin not to be discovered. We are not working for others' sake, but for the sake of our own selfish selves.

EVE LAWLESS.

What I Know of America.

BY WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

THE ICELANDERS IN AMERICA.

HISTORY is without doubt the greatest invention of the age, and the noble historian who, for the benefit of the future, describes correctly, and without bias, the epochs of the Past, and, although it is hard up, wouldn't tell a lie for money, is one of the grandest heroes of all time. Make much of him; don't stop off the sidewalk to get by him; take him to your homes; invite him to your hospitable table, and do not allow him to ask you twice for the loan of a five-dollar bill.

I was naturally led into this train of thought in looking backward over the preceding portion of this history. When I was a boy I used to be tickled for telling the truth so much, and I thought it wasn't fair; not that it might not be things which I hadn't ought to tell, but because it was the truth, anyway. The trouble of most histories is too much sameness; there is little originality in them that if you take up any two histories of the same land you will find them quite alike, and therefore monotonous. Originality is one of the main features of our celebrated family and its records.

Far to the north of England, pretty nearly

in the same place where it is now, in those

early times laid the little island of Iceland,

washed by the frozen waves of the Aurora Borealis or Arctic Sea, which surrounded it pretty much entirely. This island was the seat of all the cold weather that flowed down over Europe, and made even kings blast their eyes and blame their nose.

The inhabitants were a hardy set, according

to Hardee's tactics, and lived on cold weather and fish.

They were fearless and strong, with

manners so entirely free from the conventionalities of courtly life that they didn't know anything about it. They were not happy unless they were half-frozen, and always ate ice-cakes for tea and boiled their coffee cold. They originally had winter twelve months out of the year, and so, to have more months of winter in the year, they made each year have fourteen months.

About a hundred years after the downfall

of the Northmen in America, a colony of Ice-

landers by some means learned that railroad

lands could be entered cheap in Vineland, and

concluded to emigrate there. As there was not

wood enough on their island to build a vessel,

they embarked on an iceberg which was en-

route for the West, and landed in the vicinity

of Boston in 927 Anna Domino, where they

soon began to settle—everything except their

debt, and built the ancient and renowned city

of Iceopolis in course of time.

These people were a cold, classical set, and

the old documents say that, as the winters

were remarkably mild they brought with them

much of the cold weather of their native land.

They selected the freestzing days to promenade

or stroll on the present Common—the only

one where the snow did not lie deep, and

the only one where the sun shone brightly.

They introduced ice-cream into this country

and throve so greatly that they established

mulberry factories with ice in them.

They loved cold weather so well they always

selected the freestzing days to promenade

or stroll on the present Common—the only

one where the snow did not lie deep, and

the only one where the sun shone brightly.

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the only one where the sun shone brightly.

They introduced ice-cream into this country

and throve so greatly that they established

ANSWER.

BY EMILIE CLARE.

Oh, cunning poet of a well-tuned lyre,
You've trespasses on the silvery voice of speech,
And lighted it with a Promethean fire,
Through earth and sky, where symphonies can
reach.

"The sweet warm rain" is not a silence falling,
But low-toned message from an All-wise power—
A measured, mystic poem, softly calling
Man's promised harvest and the tender flower.

The lightning's flash companioned with the thunder,
I care not if its voice be loud or low,
To hear its language; and transfigured, I wonder
At Him whose hand has fashioned all below.

"The still, small voice" does not convey a silence;
"Tis silver, coined in crucible of mind,
Then whirled forth in a harmonious cadence,
In softest sweetness on the passing wind.

The brooklet's babble or the meteor's hissing—
Oh, list their teaching, dear and honored bard!
A poet's heart can understand their language
And drink with rapture every potent word.

But earth, air, sea hath each a language
Whether in storm, or wind, or foam-capped waves,
For Nature's book is written full and plainly,
Though man may win his knowledge from its caves.

How Their Happiness Came.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

ST. CLARENCE stood looking at her, his face full of white pain, his grave handsome eyes showing eloquently the anguish and desolation of his spirit.

For a moment earlier, Winifred Champney had refused him—gently, tenderly, with distress on her sweet, pure face and keen regret that she was forced to make him suffer so, in her low, pitiful tones.

But, for all her sweetness and tenderness and sympathy and distress she had been resolute.

"I so thank you for your regard for me, Mr. St. Clarence—I shall ever remember it as one of the brightest spots in my life." But—"and her voice had lowered to an inexpressibly gentle tone, whose very carefulness and pitifulness maddened him—"I do not love you, and I would not dare marry where I did not love."

She was so sweet and winsome to see, so womanly and delicate for a girl of nineteen. And so lovely in her beauty—slight, graceful, dignified, always a little more grave and thoughtful than other girls of her age and position in society, and even more grave and dignified since the troubles had come upon her that left her to face the world without parents or money.

St. Clarence had always worshipped her, since the time a year or so before when her father had taken him home to dinner one evening and introduced him to Mrs. Champney and Winifred, with an after ardent recommendation to their notice and friendship.

And now, when, in one little half-year, there had occurred the startling series of pitiful calamities to the girl, her parents both taken from her, and the magnificent home literally sold over her head, it had been, as Winifred said, one of the brightest memories of those expressively weary times that Carroll St. Clarence had offered her his hand and love, his name and fortune.

Culy she could not accept because, as she had gently, honestly told him, she did not love him. And to such a girl as Winifred Champney, St. Clarence's fortune and social position were no temptations whatever.

So St. Clarence had made his ardent, passionate plea, and been rejected, and then, stood looking at the sweet, pure pale face that his heart and soul so longed to gather to his breast, and kiss forever away the solemn shadows out of the dusky eyes.

"But I cannot have you go out in the world and be buffeted about as a cruel Destiny arbitrarily chooses!" Winifred—even if you don't love me, let me take you and care for you!

Winifred, my dear little girl, do you think I can endure the luxuries and elegancies of my lonely home, known to the woman I love, the woman I want, is working for daily wages, perhaps hungry, perhaps not suitably clothed, often weary and lonely, and certainly with no one to cherish and protect? Oh, my darling, be merciful! Come to me and let me teach you how to love me. I will try to be content with what you can give me—friendly trust and regard. Winifred—think again, I pray you!"

She shook her dusky head, that was so firmly and proudly poised on her fair white throat.

"It cannot possibly be, dear Mr. St. Clarence. I am not afraid to face the world, but I am afraid to bestow my hand where my heart cannot be given."

And with her firm, gentle resoluteness he had to be content; and he went away from the plain little boarding-house, where, in exchange for music lessons to two refractory girls, Winifred was allowed comfortable accommodations—went away with his heart crushed to the very earth, and feeling as if never again would the sun shine golden-bright for him.

While Winifred went slowly up to the little plain room which was not so pleasant as had been the servants' rooms in Mr. Champney's aveneue mansion.

There was a little look of pain on her mouth and a deep, troubled expression in her eyes as she sat patiently down to some sewing.

"I could not have done otherwise—oh, it would have been dreadful to have promised to be his wife just because he could save me from this life! I wish I could love him, I have tried and tried, and I cannot care."

And then, the manner thus conscientiously set in her own mind, Winifred went on in her plain, new, dull little way of living, to be suddenly and sharply aroused from it, a day or three weeks later by a telegram from Carroll St. Clarence, that briefly said only this:

"I am dying. Will you come to me?"

Dying! Her one good friend, her one dear friend. Dying. It seemed a cruel mockery to talk of his dying in the flush and glory of muscle, with everything in the world to live for.

She listened to him as fast as the first express train could take her, to find him lying pale and peaceful, waiting for the woman he loved.

He could still speak, weakly, laboriously, but his face grew radiant with a tenderness that seemed less of mortal joy than the reflection from the hither shore, when she knelt weeping by him.

"No—this is best for me, Winifred," he said, tenderly. "I would rather die like this, with you here beside me, than live without you. My darling, do you know why I have sent for you?"

Even amid all the pity and desolation in her heart, she shivered at his suggestive words.

"Oh, my friend Carroll!"

He interrupted her, quietly.

"I want you to let me give you my name before I go, dear. I want you to know how thoroughly, how perfectly I love you. You will not refuse? It is the last request I shall make of a human being—don't refuse me this—don't send me away—out yonder—without granting me this. It will not hurt you, Winifred—I will not be here to annoy—you will be comfortable and happy and free as ever—and I—"

He smiled in her horrified eyes.

"Oh, Carroll!—no! no! I cannot take advantage of you—I do not want to be cruelly selfish—!"

"I understand, dear—fully. But you seem to forget how it will take the last step from my dying pillow, how it will lighten the way clear to the Beyond if I may know my wife worse for me."

Her beautiful face was pale as his, her eyes glowed like dusky stars, her voice was clear, intense.

"Will it do that for you, my friend? Knowing all you know, will it please and comfort you?"

"It will make me welcome death to call you my wife one little hour!"

"Then, Carroll, whenever you are ready, I am ready."

And so, a half-hour later, the family clergyman stood at Carroll St. Clarence's bedside, and in the presence of the dying man's mother and sister, and the gray-haired physician, Winifred Champney was made Carroll St. Clarence's wife.

Now, except for the mortal pallor of her face, and the deathly coldness of her hand, did the man who loved her know of the terrible agony that was in her mind.

And then, the minister went away, and Effie St. Clarence kissed the dear, peaceful, radiant face on the pillow, and threw her arms around Winifred's neck and sobbed out her anguish and gratitude, and the dear, quivering-lipped old mother blessed her boy's wife, and Dr. Dudley shook her hand warmly.

"I only wish I might have seen this under other circumstances, Mrs. St. Clarence," he said, and nobody but the man who loved her saw the uncontrollable shudder that surged over Winifred at sound of the new name.

An hour or so later the family lawyer was closeted with St. Clarence, and when Winifred was called in, afterward, her husband's face was so exquisitely peaceful and satisfied that it almost startled her.

"I wish you'd tell me there is only an hour or so more, till probate—everything is done, my wife. I am at peace with the world, my conscience and my God. Sit here, with me, dear, until the last. I want your sweet face to be the last I see this side of—"

So there they were, she, cold, pale, strung to a nervous tension that was agony to endure, and he—perceptibly growing further and further away, until, like a baby on its mother's breast, he closed his eyes, and—

All through the night they watched and waited for the breath to flutter away forever, and just when the dawn began to break Dr. Dudley took his fingers off the wrist, and turned with a choked, solemn voice:

"Thanks be to God! Carroll will live! The crisis has passed and his pulse has been strengthening steadily for fifteen minutes!"

And the next second Winifred lay in a dead faint on the floor beside her husband's bed.

Her husband! And he would live! And she—did not love him! God be pitiful!

Such fearful days followed—and yet nobody but they two understood anything about it, and even they did not wholly understand each other.

Such awful days when Winifred prayed that at heart she might not be a murderer, that God would give her strength to endure the life forced upon her, when St. Clarence cursed the fate that had made her because she was so cruelly purchased by the mistakes of it all.

Days and weeks and months passed, finding

Winifred always at her post, always where a fond, loving wife would be; finding her growing more and more patient and even more sweetly gentle than ever if that were possible.

While St. Clarence grew restless and impatient and the one great dread of his life, the dread lest she should avert while hate him instead of being simply indifferent as she was now, grew on him like a nightmare.

Until, one day he announced his intention of going abroad—to gain strength, he told Winifred—to rid her of him she knew so well he meant.

"And alone, Carroll?"

"Alone—certainly," he said, almost harshly in his bitterness. For who was there in all the world to go with him?

So, he made his preparations, with a heart heavy as lead—a heart that suffered untold agony as he saw the new glad light that was daily coming in his wife's eyes—joy at the speedy prospect of being separated from him, temporarily.

And then, he said good-bye, and went his way, by easy stages, and frequent stops until he reached the level summer lands of Florida—a heartick, heartsear man, who would rather have laid down his life than to live longer the solitary, loveless existence that Fate had appointed him.

And yet—despite all his bitterness, his soul-sickness, his brain and heart were all athrob in expectation of the letter from his wife, he knew would be there.

Only—it was not there!

And he went slowly, desparingly to the rooms engaged by telegraph, wondering why all of life and hope and joy and love such as glorified other men's lives were denied him, wondering—

And opening the door to see Winifred waiting for him—Winifred, all her passionate soul in her eyes, all her sweet, yearning nature in the low cry with which she sprang to him.

"Oh, Carroll! I could not let you leave me! I did not know, until you were gone, that—"

His face was pale as death. He looked at her—one glance in which their hearts were unified, one moment when it seemed that heaven had suddenly opened to them.

"Winifred! My wife?"

"Carroll, oh, Carroll, my darling, my darling!"

And so their happiness came to them.

Buffalo Bill,

THE BUCKSKIN KING;

OR,
Wild Nell, the Amazon of the West.

A Life Romance of the Great American Scout.

BY MAJOR DANGERFIELD BURR,
5TH CAVALRY, U. S. ARMY.

CHAPTER XIV.
THE NIGHTHAWKS.

THOUGH recognizing at a glance that he was in a trap, and that every moment he saw before him was an enemy, Buffalo Bill showed not the slightest sign of fear, but said with a smile:

"This is a strange way to receive a friend, pard."

Each glanced at the other, and then the leader answered:

"We don't know who is friends, nowadays, and has to look upon all comers as enemies; but tell me, how many is with you?"

"My horse and myself are all; I was on my way to the settlements, started to camp at the foot of the hill, and seeing your light came on here," said the Scout, quietly.

"That was when you opened the door, Jim Haskins; I tell you, light kin be seen a long way off, and we must be keeful," said the leader, who now lowered his revolver, his comrades following suit.

Pretending to misunderstand the leader, Buffalo Bill replied:

"Yes, one has to be careful, for Pawnee-Killer's band of Sioux are abroad now on the war-path."

"We don't keep a cuff for Pawnee-Killer and his Sioux, pard; it are our own kind we're afraid of, as you well know, for I is acquainted with who you be," and the man looked straight in the face of the Scout, who asked in a curious way:

"Why should white men be afraid of their own kind?"

"I have you heerd o' the Nighthawks, pard."

"Yes; they are a gang of desperadoes and horse-thieves that are the curse of this border, raiding only in the dark, stealing and murdering, and never fighting unless cornered," was the fearless reply of Buffalo Bill.

"You has us down fine, pard."

"You! you are certainly joking," said the Scout, with well-affected surprise.

"I guess not; we is the Nighthawks, of whom you has just spoke so good," was the leader's remark.

"Why, there's a reward of five hundred dollars on the head of each one of you."

"True as Gospel, pard, an' thar is thirteen of us here, so you can figger up how much we'd bring if yer was to take us all in, an' pr'aps you'd better try."

This was said menacingly, and determined not to show that he feared them, Buffalo Bill said quickly:

"If I had three good men with me, I'd try it, anyhow; but what is your pleasure with me? for I'm not a fool to attempt to fight all of you?"

And then, the minister went away, and Effie St. Clarence kissed the dear, peaceful, radiant face on the pillow, and threw her arms around Winifred's neck and sobbed out her anguish and gratitude, and the dear, quivering-lipped old mother blessed her boy's wife, and Dr. Dudley shook her hand warmly.

"I only wish I might have seen this under other circumstances, Mrs. St. Clarence," he said, and nobody but the man who loved her saw the uncontrollable shudder that surged over Winifred at sound of the new name.

Now, except for the mortal pallor of her face, and the deathly coldness of her hand, did the man who loved her know of the terrible agony that was in her mind.

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pable of loving any one, and now felt a pang of jealous fury at the thought that another stood between him and her.

"I love no man, excepting my father, Roy and I thank Heaven I never allowed myself to love you; but, quick! resume your disguise, for the bell is rung."

In spite of his assertion of the moment before about giving himself up to the police, Royal Keane, as I will still call him, resumed his disguise with alacrity, and his face was as pleasant as May morning, when the parlor door opened and an elderly gentleman entered.

"Ah, my daughter, Thomas told me I would find you here with company," and Mr. Melville, whose hair and whiskers were iron-gray, approached the spot where Louise an' her cousin stood.

Seeing the embarrassment of his cousin, Royal Keane at once advanced a step and said:

"A prodigal returns and asks to be forgiven, uncle."

"What have you dared to put your foot in my house, sir?" cried Mr. Melville, angrily.

"I have risked the life you saved from the gallows, uncle, to come and ask forgiveness of my past crimes; do you cast me utterly out of your heart?"

"Your own act, sir, your crimes, cast you out; in cold blood you shot down a fellow-being, and then to save your neck from the gallows, you killed the man who guarded you and escaped."

"To save you from an ignominious death I gave you money and sent you far away, where you found a home that should have given you a fair living in working a mine."

"After you left, I paid your forged checks, sir, and thousands in debts, until I cramped my' s in money matters for you, and now you dare to put your foot across my threshold! Begone, sir, or I myself will repene of my accursed foolishness and hand you over to the police."

The old man spoke in an angry, decided tone, while his wicked nephew stood with bowed head before him, and Louise, with tearful eyes, was at her father's side.

"Uncle, you are cruelly unkin' after the effort I have made to repene my' s sins; I worked your own faithfully, barely getting from it a few dollars."

"No, the man is not a bonanza, I know; still, there is gold enough in it to support you hand-somely, if you will work it, and only a few weeks ago I had the papers all drawn up, selling it to you, under your assumed name, for a mere pittance which I had pretended to have received; but now, sir, these papers I will to-morrow take from my safe and destroy, in punishment for your daring to come here."

"Now, sir, leave this house, or I swear to you, I will give you up to the police."

"Uncle!"

"Not one word, sir! Begone!"

"Leave my' s cousin, will you not plead for me?"

"I cannot, Roy; it is better that you go."

"Enough! I am alone in the world, for my own kindred have cast me utterly out of their hearts. Farewell, uncle! Farewell, Louise!"

He turned sadly toward the door, but as he had no word of recall came to him, and he passed out of the door and into the street, just as two men ascended the broad marble steps leading to the Melville mansion.

These two men were Moses Moloco, the Jew, and Judge Shyster.

"Well," asked the Jew, in a low tone.

"She refused me and he dismissed me from his service with 'see you at your room,'" said Royal Keane, as he walked away with dignified step, while Moses Moloco muttered to himself:

"Well, if he isn't marry the girl, my dear young friend Marmaduke must pe her husband."

The next moment Thomas opened the door and the two men were ushered into the library, bent on a devilish plot against Mr. Melville and his beautiful daughter.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 507.)

FATE.

A bright little girl,
Giving a twirl,
On her skirt,
A good-tempered man,
Bent into her;—
Was it fate?

The ice being thin,
I let them both in;
He was stout,
He climbed up on the ice,
And—wasn't it nice?—
Pulled her out.

In twelve months down the aisle,
She came with a smile,
On his arm,
Now she skates—little dear,
And feels, as he's near,
No alarm.

Beryl Ward,

THE BELLE OF CHICAGO;

OR,

Pursued to the Altar.

THE STORY OF A GIRL'S BITTER MISTAKE.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN.

AUTHOR OF "MADCAP, THE LITTLE QUAKERESS,"
"A WILD GIRL," "BLACK EYES AND BLUE,"
"PRETTY AND PROUD," "THE LOCKED
HEART," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PHENIX.

BERYL had put far from her all troubling memories of the time when she had been a party to that sad surprise in the sacred edifice when Helen Bristow had made her unexpected response to that solemn charge on the part of the minister.

"If any man know just cause or impediment why these two should not be united in the holy bonds of matrimony I charge him to speak or forever after hold his peace."

When these words were now again spoken how could she help her thoughts going back with a rush to that other nuptial hour? She could not, although she had hoped to keep her mind free from the past. But why should her lover tremble at that grave adjudication? She felt that he was trembling, and her eyes, seeking his face, found him ghastly pale.

But, think! What is this? Is she dreaming? Is the spell of the past so strong upon the household as to bewitch her? Decided? Does some one speak? Does the clergyman pause and look about him, startled? Is her brain swimming—her heart on fire? Was it ages ago or was it now that she heard a smooth, cold, too-well-known voice say: "I forbid the marriage. The woman is my lawful, wedded wife?" She struggles as with the fetters of a hideous dream; she slowly forces herself to turn—with ashen face and anguished eyes that shrink from before her—what still they are fascinated by—and there, not five paces away—standing where a broad bar of crimson light fell red as blood on his pallid smile—was Norman Bristow.

"Oh, that man is dead and buried ages ago, think, Beryl." The girl said, "I must be dreaming." Beryl, dear Beryl—"she turns instinctively to the bridegroom as for protection against some frightful danger; her eyes are so blinded she can hardly see him; she catches at the altar railing for fear she may fall."

"What is this? Who is this?" speaks the clergyman sternly.

"It is true, what he says," stammers Anthony Ward. "This man is my daughter's husband; but we have believed him dead for nearly a year. He was supposed to have been killed in the Chicago fire—perhaps you may remember seeing it in the papers. He was married to my daughter that night, while the fire was raging—went to help—and we never saw

him afterward. I am sure I do not know where he has been, and why he kept his safety a secret from us. Bristow, this is strange, by Jove! Not but that I am glad to see you, old fellow! But, I'm afraid you've made—a mess of it!"

There was a cruel smile on the lips of the returned absentee.

"I meant to. It has been at very great inconvenience to myself that I have accomplished this little surprise. But, I have done it—to my satisfaction. It is not very flattering though, is it?" he remarked, easily, to the clergyman, "to find one's wife ready to marry again in six weeks less than a year!"

The minister made him no reply but looked at the young couple standing stricken in silence.

Beryl stood, clasping the railing, white as death, her blue eyes wide open but blank as the eyes of a somnambulist; she heard every word spoken, but far off as if people in another world were talking; she looked blasted.

"What have you dared to put your foot in my house, sir?" cried Mr. Melville, angrily.

"I have risked the life you saved from the gallows, uncle, to come and ask forgiveness of my past crimes; do you cast me utterly out of your heart?"

"Your own act, sir, your crimes, cast you out; in cold blood you shot down a fellow-being, and then to save your neck from the gallows, you killed the man who guarded you and escaped."

"To save you from an ignominious death I gave you money and sent you far away, where you found a home that should have given you a fair living in working a mine."

"I have risked the life you saved from the gallows, uncle, to come and ask forgiveness of my past crimes; do you cast me utterly out of your heart?"

"Your own act, sir, your crimes, cast you out; in cold blood you shot down a fellow-being, and then to save your neck from the gallows, you killed the man who guarded you and escaped."

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No man ever possessed more blandishments with a woman than this villain.

He now refused to talk with any one except the fair young tract-distributor who visited the prison.

"Hang me," said one of the keepers, "if he ain't turned white-faced already. He knows what's comin', an' he's got to be ready in case."

"Sister Agnes," as the lady was called by the prisoners, was astonished at the respect and attentions which she received from Clark. She was also astonished that a man who appeared so much of a gentleman could be so much of a scoundrel.

She was young, and though she had undertaken the distribution of tracts in one of the worst prisons in the world, she had little knowledge of the actual depth of human depravity.

To come in contact with such a gentlemanly man as Clark appeared in all his conversation with her, an' made her feel one confrere about his sins, was something not less agreeable than rare in her prison experience.

Clark took all the tracts she brought, and he talked most glibly with her about doctrinal points.

"So you're comin' to-day, if you interest me more and more than I am," he said, "I have been telling Sunday School classes about you."

"Indeed," said Clark, "you held me up as a terrible warning, I suppose."

"Well, sir," said the woman apologetically, "I told them that you were charged with great crimes, and I am sorry, but I hoped to be forgiven. I urged them to profit by such an example of turning to the way of salvation."

They talked often together, until the woman began to look upon Clark as a brand which she had herself plucked from destruction. She began to defend him to the keepers and beyond the prison walls.

One day Clark said to her:

"You are my only friend on earth. Will you do me a service?"

"Yes, I am," she answered, at once.

"I give me some arsenic."

"What do you want it for?"

"To kill the horrible rats which run all over me at night."

"It against the rules."

"The rules say, 'How can I read your tracts and I will then the rats torment me so?'

"Thank you. Oh, you will be blessed in your good and self-sacrificing work among prisoners."

When she was away Clark said,

"Now, then, how can I live the day worse. I shall be prepared for triumph or defeat."

On another corridor was the cell of Sharp Sam. Everybody who came to the prison wanted to see him.

"Barnum would make money exhibiting you, Sam, of the keepers, 'your fame has gone far and wide.'

"I wish I was out of here," replied Sam. "I don't like to have people look at me in a prison."

"Why not? They're civil to you."

"Oh, yes, but that don't. They point at me an' say, 'Look at the scoundrel! He's a scoundrel.'

"Most of them seem to think you innocent," responded the keeper. "An' so do we."

"Why don't they let me out? Mr. Worden would go my bail."

"We can see you can't take bail for murder, which is the charge in your case."

"But you've got the right one now—Clark."

"Yes, we think so. The way'll be this. As soon as the district attorney is satisfied with the proof against Clark he'll let him out and move to enter a plea in his own case and jump his bail."

"Well, I wish be the principal witness against Clark, when his trial comes on."

"I hate to have him hung, but I s'pose I must."

"Or hang yourself," warningly said the keeper.

CHAPTER XXV.

SHARP SAM'S SAILOR CHAMPION.

Danger and adventure seemed to follow Sharp Sam wherever he went.

After much delay and difficulty Mr. Worden had succeeded in obtaining the release of Sam from the Tombs. The Tombs, the largest prison which was legally disposed of, but Mr. Worden was obliged to become bail for his appearance at both the trial of Clark and of the gang.

"From him," said the official, "will come the most important links of evidence in both cases. Just as he is, he is of great assistance."

Mr. Worden took Sam home with him, and gave him some pocket-money.

"Do as you please," he said, "but look out that you are not kidnapped. You know a great deal against some people, and their friends might try to put you in the way."

It was a fact that the most determined efforts were being made to save Lucy, and the different members of his gang under arrest. They had been scattered, broken up, and most of them apprehended, but there were others still at liberty who were exerting every means to save the girl in prison.

When Lucy heard of the release of Sam, he said: "They expect to use that youngster as a witness, do they? Well, well see."

His countenance looked dark, and he shook his head significantly.

During the afternoon Sam got tired of staying indoors, and concluded that he would walk out a short distance.

"It's daylight," he said, "an' the streets are full of people. Nobody could hurt me at such a time."

But the time had not gone far, but he became interested in the passing carriages and crowds of people, and wandered on without thinking.

After awhile somebody caught him by the arm, and said:

"Why, Sharp Sam!"

"It's me."

"Why, you're all dressed up," said Sam, observing that Charles's appearance was entirely changed.

"So I am," said the boy, proudly. "We're somebody now, and live at a hotel."

"Is your mother live at a hotel now?" asked Sam, in wonderment. "Is she doin' the washin' there?"

Charles curled his lip, scornfully.

"She'll never wash for anybody any more," he cried. "Father has come home a captain, and owner of a ship."

"Gas," said Sam. "Come, I'm no fool."

Charles now told the whole strange and romantic story of his father's going away, long absence, and final return. "You don't believe what I say, come round to the hotel, on Fourth avenue, and see for yourself. Mother and father want to see you, anyhow."

"I'll go," cried Sam.

He went to the hotel, and was soon ushered into a fine suite of rooms.

His master, from Mrs. Miller and Walter was most affectionate. As soon as Captain Miller saw him, he said:

"I thought as much. You are the very boy who carried my valise."

"The very fellow," said Sam, laughing. "You find me well, too."

Then he told all about his own troubles and adventures.

"But," he said, "I've found a great friend in Mr. Worden. He's going to send me to school, and then set me up in business. I live at his house, on Fifth avenue. It's a splendid place, full of lookin'-glasses, pictures, an' all kinds of nice things."

"It ain't as nice as our ship," said Walter.

Then all laughed at Walter's remark, and Sam promised, at his first opportunity, to go on board.

"I'm only waitin' to testify at these trials," he said, "an' then I'm goin' to school. After that I'll go to work an' make a fortune. Mr. Worden says there's many a rich man in New York who was a poor boy in the beginnin'."

"Those are the sort of men," said Captain Miller. "Our father is full of them. Make them your example, and you will do well."

"I must be off. I don't like to stay late. There's some bad men want me out of the way. Good-bye, all."

Sam shook hands all round, and then left the room.

"Captain," said Mrs. Miller, looking out of the window, "it is growing late. Suppose you follow Sam a little way, and see that no one molests him."

"I will, certainly," replied Captain Miller, taking his hat and walking out.

His vigilance and patience of the villains of a city in working out their plans are among their most notable characteristics. The men of the Lucy gang were already on the track of Sam. A watch had been kept, and Mr. Worden had been following the boy all afternoon. When he entered the hotel, two men peeped themselves where they could watch all the doors.

"Bill, I wonder what the kid wants in there?" said one of the men.

"He seems to know the other boy pretty well. Per'aps the notion that we'll have trouble fore we ret' hold of him," replied Bill.

The men were very rough looking fellows. They did not belong in New York, but had been sent for in Philadelphia.

"We've mastered a good many of 'em," said Bill.

"An' I wonder where in the world, without being caught," returned Pete.

"Bill, I wonder what the kid wants in there?" said one of the men.

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THE CIDER MILL.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Under the blue New Jersey skies
Swamped with sunshines the valley lies.
The hills—I'm sorry to tell this tale—
Are somewhat lower than the vale.
Blest spot of my youth! There I stumped my
toes
And flew my kites and tore my clothes.
Our old house sits by the side of the road,
And there are the fields which in youth I sowed.
But memory turns with a wider thrill
Down the road to Smith's old cider mill.
That old, old mill, with roof of boards,
With apples round in heaving boards!
And didn't they shovel the apples in—
Into the depths of that grinding gin!
The apple-juice ran in a bubbling stream
Out of the press under the beam.
Was it not a delicious rill?
And I thought I could never get my fill;
But, oh, the barrels suffered a loss,
For I always sucked it with *seven* straws!
Cider wasn't worth much at best
Unless a boy had it under his vest.
Delicious draught of temperance folk!
They drank it and never their pledges broke.
And, oh, how it did improve with age,
Getting better with every stage!
Ah, how we struck a barrel of old
Whose delicate taste could not be told!
Straws! we longed for the tide to roll
Through the larger joint of a cane fish-pole.
If that cider wasn't hard as a brick,
Yet like molasses it was as thick.
Such a school of suckers you never saw—
Sam Swope, myself and Johnny Law.
To say the least, we drank our fill
Of the oldest bar'l in Smith's cider mill.
And each affirmed that never quaffed
Either king or knight a richer draught.
Each boy drank several gallons, I think,
Of that good deacon's temperance drink;
And it wasn't long until each fellow,
No matter how hard, got exceedingly mellow;
Nor could we see nor understand
How that cider could get the upper hand.
Pretty soon there wasn't one that knew
A monkey-wrench from a kangaroo.
What cared we for annals of Rome,
Tasks at school or licksings at home,
And saving the world? Our lot was wider—
There was nothing at all in our heads but—cider;
And so filled up were we to the brim
That our very brains began to swim.
The world took a notion to go around
With three boys stretched on the heaving
ground,
And the hum and noise of the cider mill
On drowsy ears got strangely still.
The rest of the tale, I can declare,
I do not know—though I was there.
The Imp was in the apple of Eve;
That's still in the juice I do believe!
And I never cease to think with a thrill
Of Deacon Smith's old cider mill.

The Lion-Hunters:
OR,
Life In the Dark Continent.BY C. D. CLARK,
AUTHOR OF "THE DIAMOND-HUNTERS," "TENT
ING IN THE NORTH WOODS," ETC.

III.

SHOT IN THE EYE—THE FIRST LION.

So soon had been the rush of the kaobaha and the flight of Jim that the others had hardly time to realize that he was in danger, when pursuer and pursued were out of sight behind the thorn grove. Then Mudara raised the yell of his race, and the whole band dashed away in pursuit. But, so rapid was the flight of the boy and the chase of the rhinoceros, that they could not overtake him. Not seeing the boy they had lost at the big bend in the trail when Jim broke away in rapid flight, and the two antagonists followed, they spread out on both sides and again took up the chase.

And, when the black, after disposing of his enemy, had banged against the tree once, Mudara and his brother dashed into the thicket, their spears ready for action, and the first notice the black had of his new enemies was a javelin planted in his flank. Whirling quickly, he dashed at Danatoo with his horn ready for service; but, in doing this, he exposed himself to attack from Mudara, and a second javelin, deeply planted than the first, pierced him in the thigh.

The brave beast saw that he was in danger, but with the tenacity of his breed he did not flinch. He made a rush at Mudara, whistling shrilly. Jim slipped quietly down from the tree and seized his rifle. Now that he had backed the boy was ready for sport or fight. His weapon was a good one, and he felt tolerably sure of his aim, but he knew that the coat of the black was proof against any ordinary bullet. A shot in the eye would be fatal if he could make it, but, aside from that, he did not believe his rifle could be effective. Grasping the weapon firmly, he threw himself in the way of the vicious brute, and aiming for the eye, pulled. Then, turning quickly, he ran for his life.

Scarcely had he taken a dozen steps when a wild yell from the lips of Mudara called him, and looking back he saw the negro lion-hunter dancing wildly on the prostrate form of the kaobaha, and assailing him loudly with insulting epithets. Jim ran back, and found to his delight that his bullet had passed through the glaring eye of the rhinoceros directly into his brain, and the great beast was dead.

"The white man's thunder is sure!" said Mudara bawling low. "The boys are stronger than the men of Kuruman. Let us go."

They returned on the trail, and were soon joined by Arthur and the rest, who were delighted to find that Jim was unharmed.

"But look here!" protested the boy. "I'm not so self-sufficient that I want the fun all to myself. The next time you see a rhinoceros put out after me I give you permission to pile in and help all you can."

"You can't run fast," averred the captain. "We couldn't see your back for the dust."

"I didn't run any too fast, I can tell you. That old horn was just playing tag with the skirt of my jacket all the time. I only wished I had wings about that time."

It was too early in the trip to think of preparing for the bodies of the slain rhinoceros; yet Paul had his own thoughts, with hanging eyes and a weary face, as he lay on the ground. But, after awhile, they were left and the antagonists kept on to the spot where the eland had fallen, thinking to secure steaks enough for their noonday meal. To their disgust the body of the huge deer was gone! They could see a broad mark upon the grass as if the animal had been dragged along for some distance, and Arthur commenced to follow it up, his rifle thrown carelessly into the hollow of his arm, when a wild cry from Mudara called him back.

"Tao!" he announced, briefly.
"A lion!"
"Three!"

"How do you know that?"

The boys pointed to the grass, and even the eyes of the young American could make out the tracks of animals of the feline race upon it. But he was not yet sufficiently master of his craft to make out the number.

"I don't know how many lions there may be," returned Arthur, quietly, "but this I will say: I don't propose to allow them to rob me of my game in that way. Come, Paul."

The Frenchman took up his rifle, and the two darted away together upon the broad trail, and Mudara and his brother followed, calling to eight or ten of their men to join them. They kept a little in the rear of the two hunters, when Arthur turned and called to Mudara to send back for spare rifles. Two of the men ran back and quickly returned with the guns.

"You take one and follow Paul, Mudara; Danatoo can follow me, and when I call for a gun see that it is ready to my hand," ordered Arthur.

The man nodded, and they walked on quickly, following the track by which the eland had been dragged. For nearly half a mile they trod on cautiously, when a hand was suddenly laid upon Arthur's shoulder.

"There, there, there!" said Danatoo, in a soft voice. "Do you not see the lion? Do you not know that Tao is there?"

Arthur paused, and looking ahead, saw the body of the eland extended on the grass, and, surrounding it, a dark, tawny mass, seemingly without motion of any kind. But both Danatoo and his brother knew that the lions were there.

Arthur let his rifle drop to the earth, while he stood to gaze upon the scene lying before him still, sucking the blood of the eland and tearing out pieces of his flesh from time to time. Only one of them, evidently the father of the family, raised his head and looked at the men who had been so daring as to intrude upon them in the moment when they were engaged in their repast. There was a majestic look in the front of this noble beast which took Arthur by surprise, and for the moment held him speechless. But he was an old hunter, and with a powerful effort of the will threw off the fascination of that steady, malignant glare.

"Go to the right, Paul! There you can get a sight on the lions! This big fellow is mine, for he has such a saucy look that I accept his challenge." And Arthur evidently meant

"From head to foot he plied his needle, and in less than two minutes Old Pard was 'bagged.' Still he slept on like a log, and then Krieger arose in time to notice that some frantic Polson was baying also.

"There, there, there!" said Danatoo, in a soft voice. "Do you not see the lion? Do you not know that Tao is there?"

Arthur paused, and looking ahead, saw the body of the eland extended on the grass, and, surrounding it, a dark, tawny mass, seemingly without motion of any kind. But both Danatoo and his brother knew that the lions were there.

Arthur let his rifle drop to the earth, while he stood to gaze upon the scene lying before him still, sucking the blood of the eland and tearing out pieces of his flesh from time to time. Only one of them, evidently the father of the family, raised his head and looked at the men who had been so daring as to intrude upon them in the moment when they were engaged in their repast. There was a majestic look in the front of this noble beast which took Arthur by surprise, and for the moment held him speechless. But he was an old hunter, and with a powerful effort of the will threw off the fascination of that steady, malignant glare.

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